



Region 10 RTOC

Regional Tribal Operations Committee

"Tribes-RTOC-EPA: Working Together"

Port Graham Village Council, P.O. Box 5510 Port Graham, AK 99603
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January 15, 2012

Dennis McLerran, Regional Administration
Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900
Seattle, Washington 98101

Re: Idaho Fish Consumption

Dear Dennis:

This letter is sent on behalf of the Tribal Caucus members of EPA Region 10's Tribal Operations Committee (RTOC). This letter is not sent on behalf of EPA Region 10 or any employees of EPA, but solely tribal government representatives of the RTOC.

First, the Tribal Caucus appreciates EPA's decision to approve the new consumption rate in Oregon. EPA's leadership on this important environmental justice is appreciated and will help guide how this issue is addressed in other places, including the State of Washington.

Second, it is our understanding that EPA is currently reviewing Idaho's proposed changes to its water quality standards. Idaho is proposing a fish consumption figure of 17.5 grams per day. As you can imagine, the Tribal Caucus believes that this number does not adequately protect subsistence fishers in our Region and we urge EPA to direct Idaho to adopt a consumption rate that adequately protects human health by all segments of the population.

We recommend that EPA defer to information provided by Idaho tribes, downstream tribes (such as the Spokane Tribe), and those tribes with treaty-reserved rights impacted by this decision in crafting a proper fish consumption figure protective of human health and water quality. It is essential that this occur through government-to-government consultation with the impacted tribes.

The Tribal Caucus appreciates your consideration of these comments. We also request that this issue can be more fully explored in our upcoming in-person meeting in Alaska. We look forward to working closely with your office in doing the important work of protecting the environment.

Sincerely,

Violet Yeaton (e signature)

Violet Yeaton
Region 10 RTOC
Tribal Caucus Co-chair

Cc: Jim Woods, EPA Region 10
Kate Kelly, EPA Region 10
RTOC